

Returned to General Carter  
from Mr. McCone

APPROVED FOR RELEASE  
DATE: AUG 2007

DCI:Please return to me - only copy -

EO 12958 3.3(b) (1)&gt;25Y

EO 12958 6.2(c)

Byeman

These items not in order of importance but more or less as they occurred to me.

1. What conceivable advantage is there for the USA to surface this. Not Republican or Democrat, CIA or OSD, but the USA. Show me one advantage except internal politics and I'll buy it.

2. We are blissfully ignoring or forgetting why this vehicle is presently in existence and the present opinion of some of the "surfacers" that we will never use it for that purpose and should, therefore, "make it easy on ourselves" and surface is just that, opinion, with absolutely no facts to support it.

3. This leads to the "don't be naive" school of thought which says "who do you think you're kidding - the Soviets know all about this." Granted they know about it, but we also know damn well they don't know all about it and why, therefore, should we hand it to them on a silver platter? - e.g., look what the old U-2 did to Soviet air defense.

4. This leads to the "orderly revelation" as being to our advantage as opposed to the uncontrolled type of incident. I find many of these people, either in love with just the idea of surfacing (which appears to have become an end in itself) or saying it has to be done sometime, why not now. I've been hearing this for about a year and a half. We live with this thing constantly and therefore think every Tom, Dick and Harry certainly must know all about it. This just is not true.

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I am constantly amazed and gratified by how little some people who have reason to be knowledgeable know about this when they are briefed. I further maintain this thing could crack up or land anywhere, and true, we would then have to admit its existence, but damn it no more than that. We know there are plenty of people who know and are aware of this to a greater or lesser degree and who have said nothing, as long as we don't say anything. This thing can be kept

covered for another twelve months if we have to. We won't like it, but it can be done and were it not for the OX program we would not be in a position to have anything to surface anyway. When somebody makes the decision it is not to be used, then surface it. Otherwise, any kind of surfacing at this stage of the game will inevitably shoot you out of the water and deny us any opportunity we may have had to use the vehicle. Why should we not give ourselves every opportunity? Put the decision to any one of the geniuses on that basis and watch them back away.

4. The story that this vehicle is primarily a research or experimental device with no positive application, yet built of titanium and capable of above M3 would have us laughed right on to the front page. The combination of speed and titanium says very eloquently for any half-wit who claims any knowledge of aircraft and their building that this is at

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least a three year project of several hundred million dollars value which has pushed the state of the art at this time to its absolute limit. All this on a research or experimental basis. We would be murdered. If we surface as an LRI (long range interceptor) at this time why all the subterfuge on the part of defense and OSD in terms of appeals to Congress over the past years and right up to this week. This type of surfacing should have taken place the summer of 1962. Of course, in the summer of 1962 there was no political advantage.

5. Much heed should be given to President Kennedy's conversation of early Fall with Mr. McCone when he stated he must make a conscious decision as to the use of the vehicle before he would consider surfacing and he would make the decision. This is basically a security matter which by agreement is primarily the concern of your agency with the President and that's exactly how it should be handled. The politics are then forced onto this building and any approach from here would be just that, political; and I don't think the President would want to put a security matter in the political arena at this time. Furthermore, we have a substantial number of the most influential men in the House and Senate cleared. Why not use them?

6. We, of course, have the obvious situation of Lockheed, Kelly Johnson, [redacted] and St. Peter himself could stand on water while making the release and it would come out as the CIA follow-on to the U-2. On the other hand doing it on an incident or accident basis would enable us to react to a given set of circumstances and we could admit to the vehicles existence,

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and firmly state it was classified and was to remain so, and any good public relations or information man would tell you it would soon go away since this type of thing really is accepted by the public at large and understood by those in a position to know considerably more than the average citizen. Give these same people a story which in the slightest insults their intelligence and they will gleefully rip you to shreds.

Think I've ranted and raved to you sufficiently on the foregoing that I don't have to go in to further detail. Hope you can pick some crumb of help from this.